



Porter County Sheriff's Department

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Received & Inspected

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Federal Communication Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

FCC Mail Room

To Whom It May Concern:

There seems to be great FCC consternation concerning the cost of collect phone calls made by inmates in jails and prisons across the nation. I have read reports that orders for rate reductions are forthcoming. The reduction in these phone rates will only serve to **reduce revenue to Sheriff's Departments and States' Departments of Corrections.**

First of all, I consider myself to be a compassionate human being. I am not callous to the hardships faced by inmates and their families, but I firmly believe that the rates charged for the *privilege* of making phone calls from jail are not unreasonable. It's important to keep the issue in perspective.

- The phone is only one of the available ways to communicate with family. The USPS is available as are personal visits. Many facilities are adding (as we are) internet visitation.
- Current rates are not dissimilar to or even cheaper than those charged to *anyone* making a collect call from a public payphone. (I have read of \$20/min. charged at an airport payphone.)
- The funds derived from those collect calls are used for myriad departmental projects and equipment that will otherwise necessitate taxpayer funding. (For example, we buy electronic items used for law enforcement, e.g. cell phones and laptops.)
- One significant reason for the costs of the phone service is that the system incorporates numerous functions related to system security (for the **protection** of the inmates.)
- Another **huge** function of the phone system is **criminal investigation**. Police are often able to derive valuable information through monitoring those **non-privileged** conversations. The technology required to allow for that is extremely expensive.

Please consider how rate changes will **harm police agencies** across the nation. If an inmate chooses, they may access other avenues of communication. Law enforcement has no choice but to reduce crime fighting tools, or go back to the "tax trough" once again.

Respectfully,

Sheriff David E. Lain